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Civitella,
Arezzo.

21 November 44.

STATEMENT OF:-

CESARENI Rino,
Via Golognese, No.8,
Florence.

Who saith,

I have been employed as an agent for the AGIP Fuel Company of ROME since 1933. On the 2nd or 3rd January, 1944, I was sent from FLORENCE to AREZZO to deal with the petrol rationing to civilians.

Through the Allies bombing the petrol dump in AREZZO and having trouble with the Germans over the remainder, I distributed what was left amongst doctors and so forth. When this was done I decided to go and live at CIVITELLA.

With my niece PUGI Maria Grazia, aged 10 years, I arrived at CIVITELLA about 1400 hours on Thursday, 18th. June 1944. My fiancée GIULIANI Giuliana, 26 years, lived here with her father Doctor GIULIANI Lorenzo and mother GIULIANI Dina. I had my meals with my fiancée and slept at the house of CENSINI Penelope whose house was near the south-west entrance to the village.

About 1700 hours on 18th. June 1944, I saw three German soldiers enter the village. These soldiers I cannot describe very well. They were dressed in the usual German uniform and one carried a camouflaged smock over his arm. One of these soldiers had a flag RFB made of red, white and blue squares on his arm so I presumed he came from the Province of ALSACE LORENA which is half German and half French. Later, I saw these soldiers go to the DOPO LAVORO Club.

About 1930 hours, when I was in the house of Doctor GIULIANI, I heard some shots and was later told that German soldiers were firing a Verrey pistol from the square. I was advised by my fiancée to go to the house where I slept and remain there, as there were Partisans in the area and she was afraid of what may happen.

I went to bed that night about 2100 hours and the remainder of the night passed without event.

About 0500 hours the following morning, Monday, 19th. June 1944, my fiancée came to the house and told me of the Germans who had been killed in the DOPO LAVORO Club. I packed my bag and with Doctor GIULIANI, his wife, daughter and my niece, I went to the farm of MARZOLI Francesco. This farm is about two kilometres west of CIVITELLA.

We remained at this farm until about 0900 hours on Thursday, 23rd. June 1944, when we returned to CIVITELLA.

The people had all returned to the village by this time and everything appeared to be normal.

About two days before the massacre, three German soldiers came into the village in a military car. They took

all the radios/....

They took

all the radios and typewriters they could find but did not come into the house where I was. I cannot describe the soldiers as I only saw them from the window of the house.

The next time I saw the Germans in the village was Thursday, 29th June 1944. About 0600 hours, my landlady CESINI Penelope came to my room and told me to leave as the Germans were in the village. I looked out of the window and saw two German soldiers standing in the street. As they saw me one of them raised an automatic rifle and fired. I ducked immediately. I saw him move and the bullets hit the window and roof. Those bullets which hit the roof set fire to it so they must have been incendiary.

A few minutes later the Germans burst upon the door of the house and came up to my room.

I can speak the German language so I shouted to the soldiers that I was a refugee and had papers to prove it. One German kept me covered with a machine-gun while the others searched my room taking all my possessions which he thought were of any value.

I asked these soldiers to take me to an Officer and one of them said:- "There is a Captain outside. You can see him when you go out."

I was then taken downstairs to this Officer. He was dressed the same as the other soldiers, with camouflage jacket and steel helmet. He was about one metre seventy four centimetres tall, medium build, high cheekbones, tanned complexion. He wore a broad leather belt with a shoulder strap and carried his revolver in his hand. This Officer examined my papers and as he was doing so BIANCHI Giovanni came up to me with his son. BIANCHI apparently mistook me for the German interpreter as he gave me his papers and begged for his life. I told the German Captain that BIANCHI was also a refugee from FLORENCE and in the same position as myself.

The Officer then gave the order for BIANCHI and I to be marched to the gates of the village and kept prisoners. Before I left I asked leave to go back to the house and collect a few things. The Captain granted me permission to do this and I was sent back under an armed guard. There was very little I could get as the house was on fire but I did manage to put a few things into a suitcase.

As I was leaving the house two German soldiers came in carrying the body of a man which they took to a part of the house which was blazing furiously.

I again joined BIANCHI and he and I were marched to the village gate at the south-west end of the village. The Officer also came to this gate and after saying something to a soldier who was wounded and sitting, there, the guard turned us round and then marched us back into the village.

The Officer again came with us and as we passed

the hospital I/....

/as we passed

the hospital I saw an old man lying kicking on the pavement. He had been shot but was not dead. A German soldier who was also passing fired other two shots into the body.

We were taken to the well in the village square and here a tall soldier came up to us whom the guard addressed as Lieutenant. This Officer ordered the child to be taken away from BIANCHI and started to go through my suitcase. I gathered then that I was going to be shot but as the Captain was only a few metres away I ran to him and again pleaded for my life. The Captain came back to the Lieutenant and told him we were prisoners and not to be shot.

We were then marched down to the gate at the south-east entrance to the village.

During the time that I was in the square I could hear shooting from behind the school and the screams of dying and wounded people. The square itself seemed to be filled with the bodies of men. Beside the school there was a great pile of dead, as though they had been shot and thrown on top of one another. Some German soldiers were engaged in carrying bodies from this pile and throwing them into burning houses.

From the gate we were marched to a bridge about two kilometres south of CIVITELLA. Here we were allowed to sit down under a tree. There was a number of German soldiers here but everyone was dressed in a camouflaged jacket and steel helmet.

We were at this bridge about two hours, when we first arrived there were about thirty other men but these were taken away by the Germans and shortly after we heard machine-gun fire. During this time soldiers brought cows, pigs, sheep, ducks and hens. These animals were kept there and I suppose were later taken away by the Germans.

At the end of this time a lorry arrived with a few ducks on it and we were made to get onto this. We were taken to SPOIANO SUPERIORE to the villa of BONECHI Emilio.

At this farm I met a German Sergeant-Major who told me I was going to be interrogated by the police. He also told me to say nothing to the civilians about the affair at CIVITELLA or I would be shot.

I was taken to an Officer whom everyone referred to as 'Captain.' This Officer had just started to examine my papers when British planes came and started bombing in the area. This of course caused confusion and everyone took cover.

When the action finished I went back to the Captain but he had his overcoat on and was preparing to leave.

Before he left, the Captain said he was sorry for the people of CIVITELLA, also that I would be taken to the convent at MONTE SAN SAVINO, by a Lieutenant of the HERMANN GOERING REGIMENT.

All the soldiers here, except the Captain

were dressed in/....

/except the Captain

were dressed in German grey-green uniforms and 'HERMANN GOERING' inscribed on the lower part of their coat sleeves. The Officer I cannot describe.

At 2200 hours, a Lieutenant of the HERMANN GOERING arrived. He took BIANCHI, his son, and I to the convent VERTIGHE at MONTE SAN SAVINO by truck.

The Lieutenant, I describe as one metre, seventy-eight centimetres tall, thin build, blonde hair, thin moustache, fresh complexion, good teeth.

During the course of our journey to MONTE SAN SAVINO he told me that he was twenty one years of age. He was dressed in grey-green uniform with 'HERMANN GOERING,' inscribed in white on black cloth woven on the lower part of each coat sleeve. I cannot remember what the silver markings were on his epaulettes.

Owing to British aeroplanes bombing the road to MONTE SAN SAVINO, we did not arrive there until about 2430 hours.

At the convent our papers were taken from us and we were made to wait about 20 minutes. At the end of that time a soldier came and gave BIANCHI and I our papers, then told us that we were free to go. That night I slept with the Monks at MONTE SAN SAVINO and the following day went to POGGIALI.

I did not return to CIVITELLA for about forty days.

This statement has been read over to me. It is true and correct. I herewith append my signature.

(Sgd) CESARENI RINO.

Statement written down in Italian, read over and signature witnessed by Pte. DI DUCA, B., interpreter, in the presence of Sgt Clewlow, both of 78 Section, SIB, on Tuesday, 21st. November 1944, at CIVITELLA, AREZZO.

I certify that the above translation from Italian is correct and true and to the best of my ability.

B. DI DUCA.